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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/18/2013
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SUBJECT: CANADA TO RECOGNIZE KOSOVO ON MARCH 18

REF: OTTAWA 0246

Classified By: PolMinCouns Scott Bellard, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) According to Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Director General for Central, East, and South Europe Robert Hage, Canada will formally announce its official recognition of Kosovo's independence later on March 18, following in the wake of Japan's March 17 announcement as the last of the G-7 countries to do so. Hage said that the official statement would stress that this recognition was "unique" and did not set a precedent, with a clear eye on placating domestic concerns related to Quebec separatism. Prime Minister Stephen Harper had punted the decision to his Cabinet -- twice -- for decision, Hage commented, another sign of the continued sensitivities here over Quebec. Canada continues to monitor the unrest in Kosovo and to urge all sides to exercise restraint, he added.

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